

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated October 12, 2005 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Applicant amends claims 1 and 10-12 and cancels claim 9.

Claims 1-15 are rejected by the Examiner. In the Office Action, claims 1, 3 and 9-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by the '976 patent (hereinafter "976"). Claims 1, 5, 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by the '921 patent (hereinafter the "921" patent). Claims 2, 4 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over 976. Claims 6-9 and 12-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over 921.

The rejection of claims 1-8 and 10-15 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claims 1-8 and 10-15 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, "a low refractive index layer on the light guide panel having a second refractive index which is lower than the first refractive index, reflecting the light incident to the light guide panel on the border area... and a condensing device located between the lamp and the light guide panel" (claim 1). None of the cited references including Umemoto '976 and Umemoto '921, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. The Examiner alleges that Umemoto '976 discloses this feature in Figure 8, however Fig. 8 clearly shows the light to be directed away from the border area, not "reflecting the light incident to the light guide panel on the border area" as required by claim 1. In addition, none of the references disclose or suggest "a condensing device located between the lamp and the light guide panel" as recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 and claims 2-15, which depend from claim 1, are allowable over the cited references.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to

discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed..

Dated: January 12, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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